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Held at Headquarters, New York,
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President: Mr. GARBA (Nigeria)

- Address by Mr. George Vassiliou, President of the Republic of Cyprus
- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by

Mr. Johanes (Czechoslovakia)
Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto (Pakistan)
Mr. Coore (Jamaica)
Mr. Asamoah (Ghana)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. GEORGE VASSILIOU, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

The PRESIDENT: This morning the Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr. George Vassiliou.

Mr. George Vassiliou, President of the Republic of Cyprus, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Cyprus, His Excellency Mr. George Vassiliou, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President VASSILIOU: I should like first of all to offer you, Sir, my warm congratulations on taking up the presidency of the General Assembly and to express my deep thanks to the outgoing President, Mr. Dante Caputo, for his work.

I should like also to express our esteem and appreciation for the excellent work of the Secretary-General - whose thoughtful and informative report we have read with great interest - in conducting the affairs and promoting the goals of the United Nations.

When we gathered at the United Nations this time last year we all spoke with hope of the dawning of a new, more peaceful epoch in international affairs. Political developments of momentous significance in the intervening 12 months have confirmed our hopes of a new era. At the same time, we have become aware of the many challenges raised by this era, which must be met effectively before our positive expectations and aspirations can be fully realized.

Relations between the two major super-Powers - the bellwether for a general amelioration of the international political climate - have continued to improve at a quickening pace, surpassing our expectations. The momentous importance of the shift from confrontation to co-operation between the United States and the Soviet

(President Vassiliou)

Union can hardly be overestimated. As a result of the opportunity for dialogue on an expanded agenda created by this new positive climate, there is today a marked overall improvement in East-West relations. A long list of disarmament accords, which a few years ago seemed unattainable, have been concluded, while the prospects for the ongoing East-West talks on conventional force reductions, chemical weapons and strategic offensive weapons have been greatly enhanced, particularly following this month's successful meeting in Wyoming between Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze and Mr. James Baker.

We are encouraged by the proposal made by President George Bush at the General Assembly for cuts of at least 80 per cent in the super-Power chemical-weapons arsenals, with the aim of a total ban on such weapons within 10 years of the signing of a multilateral chemical-weapons treaty, and by the very positive response of the Soviet Union.

Reflecting the shift from confrontation to co-operation in super-Power relations, a number of conflicts at diverse points on the globe are now on the path to peaceful resolution.

Namibia is now firmly launched on the road to independence. The personal involvement of the Secretary-General has contributed decisively to the Namibia independence process, which represents a key success for the United Nations.

We also welcome the continued progress towards the resolution of the dispute in Western Sahara, on the basis of the peace plan presented by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) just over one year ago.

In Central America, we applaud the stepping up of efforts by the Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua for the implementation of the Esquipulas II Agreement. We strongly support the help being provided by the United Nations towards the consolidation of democracy and an end to foreign interference in the region.

(President Vassiliou)

The optimism generated by these positive developments, however, is tempered by the conflicts and problems that continue to afflict other parts of the world.

In Afghanistan, despite the 1988 Geneva Accords, the civil war continues unabated, causing immense bloodshed and hardship among the people of that country. It is time that outside interference was converted into genuine interest in bringing peace and reconciliation to Afghanistan. The Afghan people need tools with which to reconstruct their country, not weapons with which to continue destroying it.

We also regret the stalemate in the Paris Conference on Cambodia. The unilateral withdrawal of the Vietnamese forces has opened the way to a peaceful settlement. We urge all the parties concerned not to use the impasse in the peace negotiations as an opportunity to launch a new round of fighting, which would inflict fresh bloodshed and suffering on the Cambodian people.

The implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) on the conflict between Iran and Iraq in large measure still eludes us, although the cease-fire agreed upon in 1988 remains in place and the loss of human lives has ended. Lasting peace in the region depends on full agreement on the interpretation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) and on its implementation.

In the Middle East, the interrelated problems of Palestine and the Lebanon are of particular concern to Cyprus, in that their resolution is vital to peace in the region. We support the launching of an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, and regret strongly the deteriorating situation in the occupied territories, where the Israeli authorities continue to react to the intifadah with killings, woundings and detentions on an increasingly large scale. We stress the need for effective negotiations based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973),

(President Vassiliou)

taking fully into account the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to live in peace in their own homeland.

We congratulate President Arafat on the statesmanship displayed in the historic decisions for a just and comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian problem which would both recognize the national rights of the Palestinian people and guarantee the security of all States in the region. The people of Israel - themselves victims of centuries of persecution - must recognize the futility of a policy that denies the aspiration of an entire people to live in their own homeland in peace and dignity.

We are appalled by the tragedy of Lebanon and the enormous suffering of its people. We welcome the return to peace and the halt of Lebanon's disintegration, as a result of the efforts of the Arab League and of the Tripartite Committee on Lebanon. Cyprus has provided all possible humanitarian assistance to the large numbers of Lebanese fleeing the country in recent months. We hope that all the parties in Lebanon will realize the futility of war and will join forces in reconstituting their country.

In South Africa, the racist system of apartheid has run its course - condemned by the international community not only as unjust but also as anachronistic. We cautiously welcome certain trends towards the dismantling of apartheid following the recent elections in South Africa, and hope for the speedy release of all political prisoners, the lifting of restrictions on political activity, and the restoration of freedom of speech and movement. We should like to join the Secretary-General, however, in warning that a partial easing of the abhorrent system of apartheid will not solve the problem of South Africa, either in the eyes of the world or in the eyes of its people. Justice will be done fully only when apartheid is dismantled fully.

(President Vassiliou)

The gravity of a problem must be measured not only in terms of the size of the territory or the number of people affected but also in terms of the principles involved. The Cyprus problem, viewed from the standpoint of principle, is an enormous moral problem, a clear case of breach of the accepted norms of international behaviour and of grave violations of the United Nations Charter, the Organization's resolutions on Cyprus and the rule of law.

Cyprus has been subjected to invasion and occupation, forced displacement of one third of its population and massive colonization by citizens of the invading country: Turkey. There are 1,619 people who are still missing and all efforts to trace them have met with Turkish unco-operativeness. In recalling these facts, I do not intend to exchange recriminations with our powerful neighbour, Turkey; it is simply a matter of putting the Cyprus problem in perspective.

Motivated by a sincere desire to put an end to the suffering of the people of Cyprus - Greek and Turkish - I expressed, soon after my election, my readiness to meet with Prime Minister Ozal of Turkey or with the President, General Evren, since certain aspects of the Cyprus problem, such as the presence of Turkish occupation troops and settlers, can be resolved only by Ankara. Unfortunately Turkey has so far not accepted my proposal.

At the same time we were happy to begin substantive talks with the Turkish Cypriot leader, Mr. Rauf Denktash, on the basis of a procedure proposed by the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar. More than 80 hours of talks with Mr. Denktash in the presence of the Secretary-General's Representative and three joint meetings in New York with the Secretary-General himself culminated, last June, in a set of ideas that Mr. Perez de Cuellar presented to the two sides as food for thought in further negotiations. In presenting those ideas the Secretary-General was acting fully within the mandate conferred upon him by the Security Council.

(President Vassiliou)

Mr. Denktash's reaction was to reject the agreed negotiating procedure and to challenge the mandated role of the Secretary-General. Mr. Denktash's position, also reflected in a resolution he secured from the so-called Turkish Cypriot Assembly, which was rejected by Turkish Cypriot opposition leaders, who we believe represent the majority opinion within their community, sets the withdrawal of the Secretary-General's ideas as a precondition for the resumption of talks.

It is characteristic that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey in his address yesterday referred to this resolution, but he failed to inform the Assembly that it demanded the withdrawal of the Secretary-General's ideas and that it laid down all sorts of pre-conditions.

Mr. Denktash, through this resolution, also in effect rejects the 1977 high-level agreements reached by him and Presidents Makarios and Kyprianou, which have been accepted by both sides as the basis for the current negotiations. Whereas those agreements provide for a unified federated Cyprus, Mr. Denktash is now demanding a separate state as a pre-condition for further dialogue. Whereas the high-level agreements support the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all the citizens of the Republic, Mr. Denktash envisages an apartheid régime in Cyprus with the complete segregation of Greek and Turkish Cypriots in two separate enclaves.

Coupled with the further hardening of the Turkish attitude in the talks, there have been threats and attempts to settle Muslims from Bulgaria in the occupied area of Cyprus. Those developments are aimed at creating new faits accomplis that would seriously undermine the efforts to resolve the Cyprus problem. They also raise serious questions as to whether the objective of the Turkish side, rather than a just and viable solution to the Cyprus problem, may not in fact be the legitimization of the present division and occupation of nearly 40 per cent of Cyprus. Yesterday the Foreign Minister of Turkey called this occupied territory

(President Vassiliou)

"Turkish Cypriot". This is indicative of Turkey's thinking. This territory is Cypriot territory. It belongs to all Cypriots, especially those who had lived there in ancestral homes for generations before they were expelled by the brute force of Turkey's military might.

The Foreign Minister of Turkey also alluded to the Republic's purchases of arms. What does Turkey expect us to do? Should we sit idle while they amass 35,000 troops, 300 modern tanks and other sophisticated equipment? We acquired defensive equipment including 16 tanks, for 10,000 to 12,000 young conscripts. Time and again we offered, in fact demanded, the demilitarization of Cyprus.

I challenge the Turkish Government: let us demilitarize Cyprus. Withdraw your 35,000 troops and we shall at the same time disband our forces and dispose of all our arms. Moreover, I reiterate the offer I made last year before the Assembly to use the funds released thereby for the development of Cyprus, especially for the Turkish-Cypriot community which has fallen behind.

We stress that we do not, cannot and will not accept the status quo as a solution to the Cyprus problem. A situation in which human rights are violated, communities are forcibly segregated on ethnic and religious lines, and territory occupied by a foreign Power is neither just nor a guarantee against future conflicts. Nor can the status quo be accepted as a solution to the Cyprus problem by the international community, for all nations are acutely conscious of the destabilizing potential of legitimizing the invasion and occupation of the territory of one sovereign State by the armies of another.

It is particularly regrettable that the Turkish side is taking such a negative position at a time of progress in resolving regional problems world-wide, after a year of hard work in the negotiations which, with the assistance of the Secretary-General and his representatives, demonstrated that a solution to the Cyprus problem is feasible.

(President Vassiliou)

The outlines of such a solution are clear. Cyprus would be federally organized and each community would have one region under its administration. The human rights of all citizens and the cultural identity and economic well-being of both communities would be safeguarded. We have proposed that the Republic of Cyprus should be demilitarized and this, together with the federal provisions, leaves no room for anxiety on the part of the Turkish Cypriots regarding their security. The Republic as a whole, however, should also be secure. This means that there is no room in the Cyprus we are working to build for the presence of foreign troops or for unilateral rights of intervention by Turkey. A solution to the Cyprus problem is possible. Now more than ever we count on our friends in the international community not to allow impediments to be placed in its way.

To sum up, we can say that the new climate of confidence between the two super-Powers has effectively reversed the post-war trend towards regional conflicts and proxy wars. It has imposed significant restraints on the outbreak of new hostilities and transferred many disputes from the battlefield to the negotiating table. We are, however, still looking forward to the day when confidence between the super-Powers will have become great enough to give the various peace efforts under way the last decisive push towards their successful completion.

The United Nations has an invaluable role to play in fulfilling the arduous task of settling problems and bringing peace to war-torn areas of the globe. We are gratified to note that as a result of the recent progress towards the resolution of conflicts four new peace-keeping operations have been launched in the last three years and an additional three are currently being actively considered. We strongly support the Secretary-General's recommendations for the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in order to boost compliance with the Organization's decisions and to render the United Nations an effective agent for the prevention, and not just the termination, of conflicts.

(President Vassiliou)

The States members of the Non-Aligned Movement, which include Cyprus and which form the backbone of the United Nations, can make a valuable contribution to the efforts to defuse conflicts and strengthen the role of the Organization. Our public and private deliberations at last month's Ninth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries in Belgrade, stressed the need for a constructive dialogue between the developed and the developing countries and explored ways of resolving global political problems, as well as economic and social problems. Hence we welcome the increasing concern and involvement of the United Nations in problems of economic development and in a number of global social issues with important political and economic implications.

Our gains in the political field could be seriously undermined by existing economic inequalities and imbalances. Despite an improvement in world output and international trade during the past 12 months, the economic situation of the developing countries has continued to deteriorate. In many developing countries economic growth is stifled by the debt burden; the overall debt of the developing countries at the end of 1988 was estimated at \$1,240 billion, and debt servicing at a massive \$171 billion.

The result is a net transfer of resources from the developing to the developed nations. According to last month's World Bank annual report, the transfer of resources from developing countries to all lenders in 1988 rose to about \$50 billion, from \$38 billion in the previous year.

While we welcome the fact that several debt-relief initiatives have been put forward recently, we would like to stress that the third-world debt problem is largely the result of low commodity prices and adverse movements in terms of trade, exacerbated by high interest rates. Thus the debt problem can never be definitively resolved unless these issues are addressed.

(President Vassiliou)

We believe there is an urgent need for a political dialogue on economic problems. The special session of the General Assembly on economic issues next spring could provide an effective forum for such a dialogue. We also welcome efforts to revive the Economic and Social Council as a means of promoting the role of the United Nations in tackling economic and social issues. However, we would also like to emphasize the need for direct talks between the developed and the developing nations on these issues.

We face today a set of problems that fall outside the strictly political and economic spheres but nevertheless significantly impinge upon them. These problems are, in varying degrees, common to all nations. Their elimination therefore requires concerted international action. The United Nations has a key role to play in generating and co-ordinating such action.

One such problem is that of illicit drug abuse. Cyprus applauds efforts to combat illegal drug trafficking and is doing its best to contribute to the suppression of the drug trade. However, we stress the need to tackle the drug problem, which has grown to such proportions as to threaten the entire social fabric of some countries, not only by trying to stop the supply but also by trying to eliminate the demand.

Not only economic rules but also common sense tell us that demand generates supply, and that under such circumstances attempting to suppress the supply merely drives up profits from production and distribution. We must find ways of reducing - even eliminating - these profits, bearing in mind at all times that drug addiction is an illness and not a crime. Meanwhile, we must continue efforts to expose and thus short-circuit the mechanisms of laundering drug profits through banks and other channels.

The scourge of terrorism is sometimes a derivative of the drug trade. We stress the need for the sharing of information and the results of research for the

(President Vassiliou)

detection of explosives or other tools of the terrorists' trade, and support Security Council resolution 638 (1989) condemning hostage-taking and calling for the release of all hostages.

All our other achievements in the political, economic or social spheres will have been in vain unless we succeed in tackling the smouldering ecological crisis faced by our planet. There is only one Earth, and it is humankind's one and only home. There is a vital need to link economic with ecological management, to link considerations of profit and production with environmental considerations.

We welcome the proposal made by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi at the Non-Aligned Conference in Belgrade for the establishment of a "Planet Protection Fund" and we recommend that this proposal be taken up here in the Assembly for further consideration and action. As early as 1972, the United Nations noted emerging environmental problems at the Conference on the Human Environment. The Organization can contribute significantly towards the elaboration of an integrated environmental policy to tackle problems such as the disposal of toxic or hazardous wastes, the depletion of the ozone layer, or desertification. We commend the ongoing United Nations Environment Programme - World Meteorological Organization study of climate change and its environmental and economic repercussions and the special United Nations study on key environmental issues, including the link between environment and development.

We are witnessing today, just as we did at the time when the United Nations was created out of the ashes of the Second World War, a rebirth of hope. Hope in humankind's better nature, in the triumph of peace over war, co-operation over conflict, human rights over oppression, and reason over barbarism. The United

(President Vassiliou)

Nations embodies these ideals and represents our best chance of working together as a world community, on the basis of common principles and interests, to achieve them.

In the year to come let us resolutely strive to end conflicts, let us reinforce our understanding of the common nature of many of our problems, and let us take action to extend respect for international law and consolidate a global ethical order. In concluding, I should like to leave members with the thought that the price of failing in these goals is one which none of us can afford to pay, while success cannot but benefit us all.

THE PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Cyprus for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. George Vassiliou, President of the Republic of Cyprus, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. JOHANES (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): May I congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly and express my conviction that under your guidance the current deliberations of the General Assembly will bring fruitful results.

In our contradictory and complex world hope for peaceful restructuring of relations between States, for their democratization, demilitarization and humanization has grown ever stronger in recent times. We would like to believe that, after decades encumbered by prejudice, tension and confrontation, a new period is emerging during which contentious problems will be solved exclusively by political means, by a dialogue in the interests of the further strengthening of co-operation and understanding between nations.

On the path to this better world the United Nations has its unique place. We value its active participation in the positive changes in present-day developments as well as the important role played in this regard by the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar.

The experience of the last two years has shown how necessary it is to develop the functions of the United Nations in the prevention of international disputes and crises. The strengthening of this preventive role of the Organization constitutes a realistic way to a further increase in its effectiveness in the preservation of peace and security. The significant and inspiring proposals which could be heard in this context in Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev's statement here last year are no less topical now than they were then. We support them and contribute to their implementation.

In the present nuclear and space age it is necessary more than ever before to build international relations on deeply moral and ethical principles. In the year

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

of the bicentennial of the great French revolution, whose heritage was followed up and significantly enriched by the great October socialist revolution in Russia, we recall not only the ideals of the enlightenment but also the humanistic message of the followers of the great achievement of the liberation of man - the message of those who could see in the horizon of tomorrow an international community where the simple laws of morality and justice by which mutual relations among people were to be guided would become the highest laws applying to nations.

Certain significant aspects of present-day developments encourage us to hope that these noble ideas will become a reality. It has been possible to improve the international climate and diminish the risk of a nuclear war. Today we see traditional mistrust and suspicion receding. The first concrete results have been achieved in the field of nuclear disarmament. There is an ever-greater understanding of the need to proceed jointly with the solution of crucial global problems facing mankind. New impetus in this regard has been provided by the recent Soviet Union-United States talks in Wyoming. There has been an increase in the role of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. The conclusions of its Ninth Summit Conference, in Belgrade, are an important contribution to the peaceful development of international relations.

If human civilization is to survive in the conditions of the threat of nuclear catastrophe, and given the ever-greater interconnection and mutual dependence of States regardless of their political systems, all countries must take new attitudes and non-traditional approaches stemming from the priority of universal human values and from the philosophy of the new political thinking.

We are optimists; yet we look upon the international situation realistically. It remains complicated. Not all are already capable now of accepting the notion of a world free from nuclear weapons and of violence. Confrontational approaches still persist, efforts are still being made to justify the doctrine of nuclear

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

deterrence, and elements of pressure and attempts to teach lessons to others still linger on.

Political, military, economic, environmental and humanitarian problems are so interrelated today that we can solve them only by acting jointly and in a comprehensive way. Therefore, Czechoslovakia has co-sponsored the initiative of the socialist countries aimed at the achievement of a comprehensive approach to the issues of international peace and security. Only common security serves the interests of all: Disarmament, development and the environment are becoming its organic components. It is strengthened by comprehensive co-operation between States in the political sphere, in the economy, in culture, science and technology, as well as in the development of human contacts and in the field of human rights. At the same time, we proceed from the premise of strict observance of the United Nations Charter, of the Helsinki Final Act and of other international norms.

At the very inception of the United Nations there was imprinted on its banner a belief in the need to build a world order on the firm foundations of legality and justice. The process of codification and progressive development of international law over the past four decades has been unprecedented in history. However, has it really become an effective tool for regulating the behaviour of States and relations among them? A huge and daunting challenge still faces us - the need to strengthen the role of international law and develop the international machinery for its implementation.

The attainment of these goals could be significantly facilitated by the decade of international law proposed by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. The broader use of the functions of the International Court of Justice is also a significant factor. We intend to add further to the almost 20 multilateral treaties on which Czechoslovakia has already accepted the jurisdiction of the Court.

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

Czechoslovakia was one of the first victims of the expansionism of German fascism that unleashed the Second World War 50 years ago. We have drawn a lesson of the greatest importance from this most terrible tragedy in human history. Any attempt to change the post-war order on the European continent or to call into question the existing political and territorial realities would be incompatible with the Helsinki Final Act and would threaten dangerous consequences for peace and stability in Europe, and not only in Europe. Only by our combined efforts can we prevent a recurrence of the horrors of war.

The European continent has an important role to play in efforts towards a peaceful world order. It is in that part of the world that the two largest military and political groupings and two of the most important integrating unions are situated. Developments there are moving towards the strengthening of the favourable trends in international relations. The Vienna final document, the establishment of relations between the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the European Economic Community, the negotiations on conventional forces and on confidence-building measures, the dialogue in the framework of the humanitarian dimension of the Helsinki process - all demonstrate the great opportunities for co-operation among the European States. The great Czech humanist Jan Amos Comenius, the 400th anniversary of whose birth will be commemorated in 1992, wrote: "The best proof of human grandeur is the work of man's hands, of man's brain. As soon as this is understood by the leaders of nations, there will be no more wars". We feel sure that the time for this understanding has already come. We believe that the inhabitants of our old continent will be able to make of it a common home based on a diversity of socio-economic systems and on respect for existing territorial and political realities and for sovereignty and the right of each nation freely to decide its own destiny.

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

Such a development requires, first of all, a reduction of conventional armed forces from the Atlantic to the Urals; the gradual elimination of weapons of mass destruction; the strengthening of the political functions of the Warsaw Treaty and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); and enhancement of general trust and confidence on the continent. This is clearly expressed in the conclusions adopted earlier this year at the session of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty in Bucharest.

We seek to ensure that the military potential of the countries members of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) is commensurate with the need of reasonable sufficiency and that their armed forces have an exclusively defensive nature. The proposals of the Warsaw Treaty and the reciprocal steps taken by the NATO States are a suitable basis for further negotiations in Vienna. We believe that if the will is there on both sides, an initial agreement could be signed at the highest level as early as next year.

There is an urgent need for the opening of separate talks on tactical nuclear weapons. This should involve a phased solution in which it would be the goal, in the first phase of the talks, to reach an agreement on reductions to equal, collective limits on both sides. In this context, we would recall the proposal put forward in April 1987 by the Governments of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the German Democratic Republic to create a nuclear-weapon-free corridor in central Europe.

Like the other Warsaw Treaty States, we have also adopted extensive unilateral measures to reduce the manpower of combat units by 12,000 men, and we are taking out of service and dismantling 850 tanks, 165 armoured personnel carriers and 51 military aircraft. This year we are reducing the production of combat equipment by

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

16 per cent. Next year the reduction will already have reached 25 per cent, and this process will continue. We are cutting defence expenditure in 1989-1990 by 15 per cent. We are also contemplating reducing the length of effective military service.

In the interests of enhancing confidence and security, we are ready to expand the Stockholm accords and adopt, on a mutual basis, a new generation of information, observation and limitation measures applying to all branches of the armed forces.

Our concrete contribution towards a more secure and peaceful world and construction of a common European home is the initiative to create a zone of confidence, co-operation and good-neighbourly relations along the line of contact between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO, put forward by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Milos Jakes. We wish to support the new trends in relations between the two military-political groupings and to seek out and utilize everything that unites us.

In the political sphere, we propose a regular and all-round dialogue between parliaments, Governments, political parties, social organizations and non-governmental institutions. We are also working towards the adoption of measures designed further to strengthen confidence beyond the framework of the Stockholm document, for example by "diluting" the contingents of forces deployed in the proposed zone. We also wish to promote the dynamic development of economic relations and the creation of the prerequisites for new forms of co-operation. We are also paying a great deal of attention to the ecological part of the initiative. We strive for the creation of a system and mechanism for multilateral co-operation in mutual assistance to preserve the quality of the air, water and

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

natural riches we share with our neighbours. In the humanitarian sphere also, we wish to create favourable conditions for mutual knowledge and understanding.

It is true that this proposal is addressed not only to the countries along the line of contact between the two groupings. The participation of other States, including the neutral States, could add to its significance. Thus, there is an opportunity to make headway in shaping qualitatively new relations, thus contributing to a further improvement of the atmosphere in Europe.

In our policy, we proceed from the assumption that disarmament is one of the priority tasks of the present epoch. After the achievement of the treaty between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, in which Czechoslovakia also played its part, the world breathed a sigh of relief. However, a large number of resolute steps still remain to be taken to make the disarmament process irreversible. Above all, the negotiations on a 50 per cent reduction in strategic offensive weapons must be successfully completed. We also assume that the anti-ballistic missile Treaty of 1972 must be complied with as signed.

The progress made in the talks between the Soviet Union and the United States on the limitation and halting of nuclear-weapon testing, about which we were informed from this rostrum, creates good conditions for resolving this key issue. We appreciate the readiness of the USSR to resume its moratorium on nuclear-weapon testing, and hope that the United States will respond positively.

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

The need remains imperative to consolidate the régime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. That goal would be promoted by the halting and eventual prohibition of the production of fissionable materials for armament purposes, as well as by the prevention of the spread of combat missile technology. A strengthening of the régime of this Treaty would be significantly facilitated by observance of the existing nuclear-free zones and by the establishment of new such zones. Reliable protection of civilian nuclear facilities from attack remains an important task.

Special attention should be focused on the achievement of a convention on a complete and general prohibition of chemical weapons and on the elimination of the stockpiles of such weapons, as called for by the Paris Conference held this year and by the recent Canberra negotiations. We welcome the fact that the Soviet Union and the United States made proposals from this podium a few days ago, the implementation of which would signal an important move towards the elimination of those barbarous weapons.

This year, Czechoslovakia has made increased efforts in pursuit of that goal, as further manifested by the corresponding statement of the Czechoslovak Government of last January. We have conducted a national experiment on the verification of the non-production of chemical weapons in the Czechoslovak civilian industry. We have also prepared an international stage for that experiment. We have reaffirmed that our country does not possess chemical weapons and that no such weapons are deployed in its territory, and we have made public the necessary data on our chemical industry in August. Our proposals of 1985 to 1988 for the establishment of a chemical-weapon-free zone in Central Europe, which could facilitate in its own way the conclusion of a global convention, retain their significance.

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

We also advocate speedy negotiations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and on the programme of practical actions for the peaceful uses of outer space. The time has undeniably come to work out an international system of verification of the non-stationing of weapons in outer space and to set up a world space-monitoring agency.

We are in favour of a concrete consideration of the "open skies" proposal, which we regard as one way to further develop confidence- and security-building measures. If supplemented with open lands, open seas and open space, the proposal could lead to the creation of a global system of comprehensive openness.

One of the first positive results of the process of genuine disarmament is also the gradual conversion of a portion of military production to civilian purposes. As for us, we have worked out a national plan for the utilization of the capacities released from the production of combat equipment. We support the idea that this matter should become a subject of international consultations, including in the United Nations.

The peaceful settlement of disputes by political means on a just basis is an essential condition for safeguarding peace, security and fruitful co-operation in the world. We believe that further progress can be made on the elimination of long-standing hotbeds of tension. Experience has shown that the United Nations can make a significant contribution in that regard.

Through the signing of agreements in New York last December, real prerequisites were created for a solution to the conflict in southern Africa. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic has also delegated its observers to the United Nations Angola Verification Mission corps in Angola and to the United Nations Transition Assistance Group peace force in Namibia. In that way we have also demonstrated our full support for Namibia's transition to independence. The

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

international community's pressure on South Africa must not abate. An appropriate added opportunity for that will certainly be provided by the special session of the General Assembly scheduled for December. Apartheid must be eradicated.

We appreciate the part played so far by the United Nations in mediating the Geneva Agreements on Afghanistan. However, it is necessary of course that the other provisions of those Agreements also be implemented after the withdrawal of Soviet troops, and that favourable conditions be thus created for a political solution of the situation and for a policy of national reconciliation. The United Nations should play an active role here. We fully support the proposals of the Afghan Government aimed at securing those objectives.

The complex situation in the Middle East requires the speedy convening of an international conference under United Nations auspices. That need has also been confirmed by the course of the general debate to date. The key to a solution of the conflict lies in the recognition of a balance of interests, respect for the legitimate rights of all participants and for their free choice of development. The uprising in the occupied territories is graphic proof of the will of the Palestinian people, which can no longer be ignored. The realistic policies espoused by the Palestine Liberation Organization have our broad support.

We express our hope that a final, peaceful and just solution to the Iran-Iraq conflict will be found.

An important step towards a settlement of the Cambodian question is the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces. We support the policy of national reconciliation, which will create the basis for an independent, neutral and non-aligned Cambodia. A resumption of the negotiations in Paris on a peaceful future for that country should be instrumental.

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

We fully support the proposals made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to open a constructive North-South dialogue to strengthen understanding and peace in the Korean Peninsula.

We welcome the initiatives of the five Central American countries aimed at a peaceful solution of the situation in that area. We wish to commend in particular the constructive policy of the Government of Nicaragua. We view the full implementation of the Tela agreements and the engagement of the United Nations as a path to the settlement of the problem.

A further expression of Czechoslovakia's active support of a peaceful solution of the question of Cyprus by negotiation between the two communities was provided by the meeting of the principle representatives of eight Cypriot political parties in Prague in May.

We welcome the negotiations between the countries of the Horn of Africa as well as Ethiopia's new initiative concerning the peaceful development of that country.

We have embarked upon the path of profound social transformations in my country. We are implementing the restructuring and democratization of all walks of life in our society, with the aim of further strengthening and improving socialism and of taking full advantage of its humanistic potential. In that process, we are drawing on the experience of the USSR and other socialist countries. We have set ourselves the demanding task of restructuring society in all its complexity without damaging social and economic stability.

What we are aiming at is a truly just, economically efficient society with its economy based on advanced science and technology, a society with a high standard of living, firm social securities, and a deeply democratic political system enabling all citizens to develop their individual capabilities in harmony with the interests of society. We assume that socialism is based on the vigorous, creative activity

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

of people. The restructuring builds on what we have achieved in the past, on the progressive and democratic traditions of the people of our country. It rests on our bonds of alliance and seeks to strengthen confidence and co-operation, not only with our neighbours but also with other States.

The changes taking place in the socialist countries are generating favourable conditions for an increase in international co-operation to a qualitatively new level. That fully applies, too, to international economic relations, the further development of which should be founded on a consistently equal platform, on the principles of non-discrimination and mutual advantage.

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

The present state of affairs is far from positive. Many serious problems exist in the world economy, and some of them are worsening. Imbalances and uncertainty about future development persist. There is an ever-widening gap between advanced and developing States. The indebtedness of the developing world is now reaching a critical point.

The United Nations can be of significant help in alleviating and solving those crucial problems. The favourable political climate should be concretely reflected in international economic relations also. Here, an important role will be played by the special session of the General Assembly, to be held in April of next year, as well as by the United Nations international development strategy for the coming decade. For our part, we are prepared to take all necessary steps.

International economic relations and scientific and technological co-operation can be enhanced only if all forms of pressure, exploitation and discrimination are removed. That is the path towards greater security in such relations. The strengthening of the functions of the United Nations so that it might be possible to foresee and prevent emergency situations in world economic development would greatly facilitate that.

We shall continue to pay constant attention to economic relations with developing countries on the basis of equality and mutual advantage. With regard to our aid to those countries, it exceeds 1 per cent of our national income.

One of the most pressing global problems in today's world is the protection of the environment. Nature and human wisdom must be in harmony. That can be achieved only through the broadest possible joint action by all. We are determined to take an active part in those endeavours on the world, regional and sub-regional levels.

Indeed, at the forty-third session of the General Assembly we submitted, together with the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, a draft resolution in the

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

field of protection of the environment. The proposal we have prepared for submission at this session, which deals with strengthening co-operation in the fields of monitoring, evaluating and anticipating dangers to the environment and with assistance in case of emergencies, incorporates the results of consultations held with many countries. It is based on the fact that there is a growing awareness of the real risk of unpredictable environmental situations that may not only jeopardize the security of individual countries but also threaten the very existence of mankind.

The preparation of a set of principles to govern the ecological behaviour of States should be an important contribution of the second United Nations conference on environment and development, to be held in 1992. We fully support the convening of that conference.

The solution of environmental questions is the aim of the proposal made by the Czechoslovak Prime Minister, Ladislav Adamec. On that basis a conference was held at Prague this year of Government representatives responsible for environmental questions in Czechoslovakia and in all six neighbouring countries. It was also attended by representatives of the European Community, the Economic Commission for Europe and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. In the memorandum adopted principles were laid down for action to be taken to strengthen international co-operation, which the participants in the conference intend to specify further. In due course we should like to hold a meeting in our capital city of the Prime Ministers of the participating countries. We also expect the forthcoming Sofia meeting on protection of the environment to achieve concrete results and help develop sorely needed co-operation in Europe.

In recent years joint efforts have made it possible to take a number of concrete steps away from confrontation and towards dialogue in the extensive sphere of humanitarian questions and human rights. The growing United Nations role in

(Mr. Johanes, Czechoslovakia)

this connection is also confirmed by the draft convention on the rights of the child, which is now being prepared. The current session of the General Assembly should bring that important initiative of the Polish People's Republic to a successful conclusion.

The position and place of man in society are increasingly becoming the central focus of world attention. The pan-Europe process has introduced a new notion - the human dimension - into international practice. It is our view that its implementation must gradually be given a universal character.

The struggle against drugs and narcotics is becoming critical, and we are prepared to contribute actively to it.

Within the framework of adopting practical and effective measures to prevent international terrorism, Czechoslovakia, together with Great Britain, has put forward an initiative in the United Nations and in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to prepare an international convention on the prevention of misuse of plastic explosives for terrorist purposes. We are pleased with the support given that idea by the Security Council, the Council of ICAO and many Member States this year. We are ready to work together with all countries towards the earliest possible achievement of concrete results.

We are all faced with a need to solve difficult problems. Many processes that existed only on a national level not so long ago now have an international scope. They influence the life of each individual country and of the entire international community. If we can control those processes properly we can ensure, in real terms, not only the survival but also the prosperity of mankind. The United Nations plays an irreplaceable role in stimulating and co-ordinating those efforts. We must grasp the chance being offered us by the positive changes that are taking place in today's world and by the growing understanding of the human relationship.

(Mr. Jhanes, Czechoslovakia)

We are convinced that the United Nations will fulfil its historic mission. In order for it to do so, however, there must be business-like and constructive dialogue and, above all, political will on the part of Member States to make active use of all the opportunities the Organization offers. Let us therefore avoid confrontation and fruitless disputes here. Let us be even more consistent in identifying the things that link us together rather than the things that divide us. Let us concentrate on the solution of problems affecting the life and wellbeing of all. Just as States now possess the means of mutual extermination, so too do they have available to them sufficient potential to realize the universally valid ideas of peace, understanding and co-operation.

Czechoslovakia is ready to exert every effort so that we may be able, all together, to rise to this unique opportunity for the benefit of all mankind.

Mrs. Nusrat BHUTTO (Pakistan): It gives me great pleasure, Sir, to offer you, on behalf of the Pakistan delegation, warm and sincere felicitations on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. Your unanimous election was a tribute to you, as well as recognition of the important role played by Nigeria in promoting international peace, security and progress. Relations between our two countries, which we highly treasure, have always been marked by friendship, understanding and co-operation. We are confident that you will guide the deliberations of the Assembly with distinction.

I should like to express our deep appreciation for the leadership provided by your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Dante Caputo, in presiding over the previous session of the General Assembly.

I should like also to pay a special tribute to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his untiring efforts to promote the purposes and principles of the United Nations and the cause of international peace. Under his leadership the United Nations has emerged as a credible and effective instrument for the promotion and maintenance of peace around the world. Pakistan will continue to extend to him full co-operation for the consolidation of international peace, security and progress.

I am honoured to bring to this body the greetings of the people and the Government of Pakistan. A new era of democracy was ushered in by the people of Pakistan last December, after a long and arduous struggle, through a peaceful electoral process. A new spirit pervades our society. Our people are confident, our political institutions are thriving, our judiciary is independent and our information media are free.

The Government's commitment to the ideals and principles of democracy is matched by an equally firm commitment to promoting the welfare of the people. Since assuming office, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has devoted her energies to

(Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, Pakistan)

improving the lot of the poor masses. The Government has launched comprehensive programmes for the eradication of poverty, the elimination of illiteracy, the provision of shelter and basic health care, the integration of women in development and the protection of human rights. It has also declared war on drug trafficking and drug abuse.

The people of Pakistan rejoice in the world-wide triumph of democracy and freedom. It is a measure of her commitment to strengthening democracy in Pakistan and elsewhere that the Prime Minister of Pakistan proposed in June this year the establishment of an association of democratic nations. The cultural, historical and ideological ethos of different countries leads them to choose the models of popular participation best suited to their circumstances. The proposal seeks to bring together democracies so they may draw strength from each other and work jointly for the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. We believe that the consolidation of democratic principles will strengthen the United Nations and the cause of international peace and stability.

As we stand on the threshold of the twenty-first century, the world is undergoing a profound transformation. The East-West dialogue has eased international tension, and the confrontation of the past could well be replaced by a spirit of constructive competition and co-operation. A number of regional conflicts appear to be yielding to the growing international resolve to settle disputes by peaceful means.

While some troubled areas in the world have witnessed an appreciable movement towards peaceful conditions, others continue to be marked by strife. Afghanistan is unfortunately one of those countries where peace has not yet returned. I do not wish to dwell on the past. Suffice it to say that while the epic struggle of the heroic people of Afghanistan led to the withdrawal of foreign troops, that could

(Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, Pakistan)

not by itself lead to a resolution of the problem. The Geneva accords of April 1988 did not constitute a comprehensive settlement, since they addressed the external aspects of the problem.

The framework for an internal settlement has been provided by the General Assembly in resolution 43/20, which called for the establishment of a broad-based government in Afghanistan acceptable to the people of Afghanistan, the voluntary return of over 5 million Afghan refugees to their homeland, and the free exercise of the right to self-determination by the people of Afghanistan - elements essential to a comprehensive political settlement. The formation of an Afghan Interim Government in February this year marked an important step towards the objective of setting up a broad-based government in Afghanistan.

The Kabul régime has been rejected by the Afghan people and is sustained within a few strongholds through massive infusions of Soviet arms. No representative group or segment of the Afghan population is willing to enter into negotiations or share power with the Kabul régime, which is held responsible for the death and destruction caused by the conflict in Afghanistan during the past decade. The solution lies in the transfer of power to a broad-based government acceptable to the Afghan people. The discredited Kabul régime has, however, refused to transfer power peacefully. In a major propaganda offensive it has made self-serving proposals intended to legitimize it. Those proposals have been rejected by the Afghan people. The Kabul régime, having failed to hoodwink the Afghan people or the international community, has chosen the path of war in a desperate bid for survival.

It is indeed ironic that the Kabul régime, which is responsible for the continuation of the conflict in Afghanistan, should seek to shift the blame to

(Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, Pakistan)

Pakistan by levelling baseless allegations of interference and violations of the Geneva accords. All such allegations have been investigated by the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and none has been substantiated.

Not content with its false propaganda, the Kabul régime has sought to pressure Pakistan through Scud missile attacks, ground and air violations and acts of sabotage. Pakistan will not be intimidated and will remain steadfast in its quest for a comprehensive political settlement of the Afghanistan problem. We shall continue to lend full support to the Secretary-General in his efforts to bring about such a settlement.

We are confident that this Assembly will reiterate its call for a comprehensive settlement of the Afghanistan issue, including the establishment of a broad-based government in Kabul acceptable to the people of Afghanistan, voluntary return of Afghan refugees to their homeland, and the free exercise of the right to self-determination by the Afghan people.

In Kampuchea, as in Afghanistan, foreign military intervention resulted in the imposition of an illegal and unrepresentative régime. We are disappointed at the failure of the Paris Conference on Kampuchea. That failure was due primarily to the attempts by the régime in Kampuchea to legitimize the consequences of foreign military intervention. It is our earnest hope that a comprehensive political settlement will soon be arrived at, resulting in the free exercise of the right to self-determination by the people of Kampuchea after the complete withdrawal of Vietnamese forces.

The tragedy of the people of Palestine endures. Israel continues to deny the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people and remains in illegal occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories.

(Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, Pakistan)

The people of Palestine have waged a heroic struggle for the restoration of their national rights. Unarmed Palestinian youths have stood firm in the face of the full might of the callous and brutal Israeli armed forces, which have resorted to murder, mass detentions, deportations, blowing up the homes of Palestinians, closing their educational institutions and strangling their economic life. Pakistan condemns those Zionist atrocities.

(Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, Pakistan)

A just and durable solution of the problem is possible only through the unconditional and total withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, including Al-Quds al-Sharif, and the restoration of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to establish an independent State of their own in Palestine, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), their sole and legitimate representative. We believe that this can best be achieved through an international conference on the Middle East with the full participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization on an equal footing.

The proclamation of the State of Palestine and the initiatives of the PLO for a peaceful settlement have been widely welcomed throughout the world. The international community, and particularly the friends of Israel, must persuade Israel to respond in a positive manner to these initiatives.

Nothing is more repugnant to the human spirit than the spectacle of a society organized on the basis of racist doctrines. The racist, minority, illegal régime in Pretoria continues to practise the odious system of apartheid with brutal force and intensity. This has left the long-suffering people of South Africa no option but to intensify their struggle against the racist régime. It is our firm conviction that the irrepressible demand of the majority community of South Africa for equality, liberty and majority rule cannot be suppressed for long. The Government of Pakistan fully supports their valiant struggle for freedom, equality and dignity. We support the demand of the international community for the imposition of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against the racist Pretoria régime till the eradication of apartheid and the establishment of majority rule in South Africa.

We must ensure that there is no retrogression in areas where the United Nations has achieved success in promoting peaceful solutions to raging conflicts.

(Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, Pakistan)

With the approaching independence of Namibia a stronghold of colonialism is nearing its end. The valiant and protracted struggle of the people of Namibia, under the dynamic leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), supported by the United Nations has paved the way for Namibia's independence. The international community must ensure that the independence plan is scrupulously adhered to by South Africa and all practices in contravention of the letter and spirit of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) cease forthwith. Pakistan is proud to be associated with the implementation of the independence plan under the aegis of the United Nations through the contribution of personnel to the United Nations Transition Assistance Group. The day is not far off when Namibia will occupy its rightful place as an independent State in the comity of nations.

We remain hopeful that the peace talks between Iran and Iraq under United Nations auspices for the implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) will lead to a just, comprehensive and durable settlement and that the two countries will be able to devote their energies to the gigantic task of economic and social reconstruction.

An area that deserves the urgent attention of the United Nations is that of the plight of minorities in many parts of the world where they are denied their fundamental human rights and are treated as outcasts, fair game for discriminatory treatment. The States whose citizens they are must provide them full protection. If the States concerned should fail to do so or indeed should become the tormentors themselves, it is the duty of the international community to demonstrate effectively its concern for the hapless and unfortunate minorities. We are particularly concerned at this juncture over the travail of the Turkish Muslim minority in Bulgaria. More than 300,000 Bulgarian Muslims have been forced to take refuge in Turkey. We hope that the policy of forced assimilation which has led to

(Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, Pakistan)

this exodus and has evoked world-wide concern will be abandoned and the human rights of the Bulgarian Muslims respected.

The positive developments in the political arena between the East and the West are not, unfortunately, reflected in the field of international economic relations, particularly between the North and the South. Despite a recognition of the growing interdependence of the world economy the divide between the rich and the poor nations continues to widen, dialogue remains stalled, and the economic problems of the developing world remain unaddressed.

Many eminent leaders from developing countries have articulated from this rostrum their deepening concern over the continuing economic crisis in the third world. The socio-political consequences of this crisis for the developing economies are only too well known. The fundamental issue facing the developing world is a simple one - its inability to foster socio-economic progress and welfare in an uncongenial external economic environment.

The economic situation of many developing countries has deteriorated and the number of people living below the poverty line has increased. Reduced external assistance, debt-servicing, low commodity prices, adverse terms of trade and increased protectionism have resulted in massive reverse financial flows. The economies of a large number of developing countries have thus been drained and the process of development brought to a standstill.

The third world countries continue to impress upon the industrialized North the need, in an increasingly interdependent world, to resolve international economic issues through dialogue. However, all efforts to revive the North-South dialogue have foundered because of the negative attitude of the North. Major industrialized countries are impervious to our concerns. The third world has at best a marginal role in international economic and financial decision-making.

(Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, Pakistan)

The external debt burden of the third world countries reached the astronomical figure of \$1.32 trillion in 1988. We believe that an equitable solution of the debt problem must be devised which would allow reasonable economic growth and avoid disrupting the political and social fabric of the debtor nations. Debt relief measures should apply to both official and commercial debts. Countries which have managed their external debts efficiently should not be penalized by being excluded from debt-relief measures. Development assistance must also be enhanced.

The protectionist policies of the developed countries support inefficient local industry, run contrary to the principle of comparative advantage, reduce world productivity and act as a serious obstacle in the way of the economic development of the developing countries. Tariff and non-tariff barriers against imports from the developing countries are erected by those very countries which advocate the merits of free-market economies. It is time for them to lead by example rather than by precept and to dismantle these barriers. It is also our hope that the current Multi-Fibre Agreement (MFA) will not be extended further after it expires in 1991.

(Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, Pakistan)

It is time to resume the dialogue. The special session devoted to international economic co-operation and the revitalization of economic growth and development of the developing countries, scheduled for 1990, will provide an opportunity for the adoption of concrete measures to redress the structural problems besetting international economic relations. Simultaneously, serious attention must be devoted to the elaboration of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade.

The protection and preservation of the environment is indeed a shared objective. Pakistan, for its part, has consistently supported international efforts to this end. We believe, however, that the improvement of the environment is closely linked to the eradication of poverty. There is thus an inherent relationship between environmental improvement and economic development. It is equally important that the developed countries should provide the technology and the financial resources to the developing countries to fight environmental degradation, while sustaining, if not accelerating, their economic growth. Furthermore, the environment should not be the only subject on the North-South agenda. The entire range of economic issues must be discussed, with a view to finding common solutions.

Pakistan has always been in the forefront of efforts to promote international peace and security and to remove the nuclear threat that hangs over humanity. We therefore welcomed the commencement of talks between the United States and the Soviet Union on the reduction of their strategic nuclear weapons. It is our expectation that the talks will lead to a substantial reduction of the nuclear arsenals of the two super-Powers and ultimately to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Pending the achievement of this ultimate objective, effective and legally

(Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, Pakistan)

binding international arrangements must be worked out to assure all non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or the threat of the use of nuclear weapons.

It is a matter for some regret that the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, which is an essential first step towards halting and reversing the nuclear-arms race, has remained elusive. We strongly urge the early adoption of such a treaty.

Pakistan has consistently supported negotiations at the global level for progress towards general and complete disarmament. However, we recognize that progress towards this goal is likely to be slow. Meanwhile, it is desirable for peace-loving countries to consider measures for disarmament at the regional level, with a view to strengthening regional peace and stability.

It cannot be denied that the sense of insecurity experienced by the smaller States usually emanates from within their region itself. The origin of such insecurity lies in a variety of factors, including unresolved territorial disputes, ambitions for regional dominance, hegemonic designs and interventionist policies. Further, the security concerns of States differ from region to region, depending upon the nature of their threat perceptions. Therefore, a regional approach offers the most realistic prospect of rapid progress towards disarmament. We believe that confidence-building and disarmament negotiations should be pursued simultaneously at both the global and the regional levels.

Pakistan abides by the concept of nuclear non-proliferation, but it also expects the nuclear Powers to reciprocate, by eliminating their own nuclear-weapon stocks. Nor should the concept of non-proliferation be used as a pretext to prevent developing countries from acquiring nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Let me reiterate once again that Pakistan's nuclear programme is devoted entirely to peaceful purposes.

(Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, Pakistan)

Our commitment to keeping our region free of nuclear weapons has led us to propose that, pending the adoption of a global treaty, regional or bilateral test-ban agreements may be concluded. In the same spirit, Pakistan has made a number of proposals, including the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, a proposal which has been repeatedly endorsed by the General Assembly.

We support all steps to prevent an arms race in outer space. We attach equal importance to the early conclusion of a convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons.

Negotiations for conventional disarmament at the global and regional levels must also be pursued vigorously, with a view to ensuring undiminished security of the States concerned at the lowest level of armaments and military expenditures. This objective has become all the more important because of the increasing sophistication and destructive power of conventional weapons.

Naval disarmament has also acquired urgency in view of the rapid growth in the naval flotillas of some States, including the introduction of nuclear-powered submarines. This trend is a cause of serious concern, as it may lead to an arms race in this field at a qualitatively higher level and scale.

Since its independence Pakistan has steadfastly pursued the goal of improving the security environment in its neighbourhood. To that end, we have made consistent efforts to develop good-neighbourly and co-operative relations with all our neighbours, including India, based on the principles of sovereign equality and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States. In the spirit of the Simla Agreement, we shall continue to seek a peaceful settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, which recognize the right of the people of the State to decide their future.

(Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, Pakistan)

The agreement on non-attack on each other's nuclear facilities, signed between India and Pakistan in December 1988, constitutes a significant confidence-building measure, which will have a stabilizing effect on the security situation in South Asia. We, on our part, are prepared to enter into negotiations for other similar measures. It is our hope that India will respond positively to our initiatives and proposals aimed at strengthening regional peace and security.

The South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) offers an excellent opportunity to its member States to forge greater co-operation between themselves. The Fourth SAARC Summit, held in Islamabad in December last year, took a number of momentous decisions on evolving regional approaches to common problems. The designation of 1989 as the SAARC year for combating drug abuse and drug trafficking underscored the joint commitment of the South Asian countries to eliminate this scourge from our region.

The role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and stability is indispensable. We welcome the successful role played by the United Nations in resolving disputes and conflicts between its Member States. The United Nations must also provide the platform for developing a partnership between the rich and the poor. Let us pledge to make this world body stronger, so that it may address itself effectively to issues of universal concern. It is only through recognition of the common destiny of mankind and a co-operative approach in resolving the problems facing us that we can hope to usher in a progressive world order, based on peace, security and justice.

Mr. COORE (Jamaica): Just over one year ago my country, Jamaica, was devastated by one of the worst hurricanes in our history. At that time we received generous and spontaneous assistance from the international community, from a large number of individual countries, large and small, and from thousands of individuals within those countries. This assistance supplemented the heroic efforts of our own people and enabled us to repair the physical damage and resume a reasonable approximation to normal activity in a shorter time than originally seemed possible. But, even so, the structural and underlying economic damage still presents us with formidable challenges. This experience gives us a special feeling of sympathy and solidarity with the peoples of the Eastern Caribbean, Puerto Rico and South Carolina that have recently suffered similar devastation from hurricane Hugo. We extend to them our deep and heartfelt sympathy. We have ourselves given whatever immediate help we could, particularly to our Caribbean Community partners - Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Antigua. We stand ready to do whatever else we can. We strongly endorse the appeals to the international community to assist those countries as generously now as we ourselves were assisted in our time of need.

On a happier note, Sir, we extend to you our warmest and most sincere congratulations on your election to the presidency of this session of the General Assembly. You are one of Africa's most experienced and skilled diplomats, and we therefore believe that your election augurs well for the success of our deliberations in this important session. The historical links and close fraternal relations that have existed between your country and ours gives us a special and particular pleasure in welcoming your leadership in these deliberations. To your predecessor, Mr. Dante Caputo, of Argentina, we join previous speakers in expressing sincere appreciation for the constructive and able manner in which he presided over the affairs of the forty-third session.

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

It is particularly significant and must give you, Sir, a special sense of gratification that your presidency of the Assembly coincides with the moment when a long-awaited and long-overdue political development is taking place in southern Africa. The fact that we can look forward to the completion of Namibia's progress towards independence not only is a source of satisfaction to all those who have struggled so tirelessly and persistently against South Africa's obstinate and illegal hold over that Territory, but is a tribute to the work of the United Nations in mobilizing the world community around this issue.

But we must not celebrate too soon. We have to remain vigilant to ensure that even at this late stage South Africa does not succeed in subverting the electoral and constitutional arrangements for Namibia's independence. We are deeply concerned at reports of widespread harassment, intimidation and killings of supporters of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). We must continue to insist that South Africa scrupulously comply with the full implementation of resolution 435 (1978) in its original and definitive form so that the people of Namibia can participate freely and without intimidation or violence in the electoral process, under the control and supervision of the United Nations. We in Jamaica have joined with others in sending personnel to Namibia for the purpose of ensuring these objectives, and we are a part of a Commonwealth team that is now in Namibia investigating and monitoring the ongoing process. We trust that the Security Council will lend its full weight to ensure that South Africa proceeds to disband all its paramilitary and commando units, particularly Koevoet, that still threaten the implementation of orderly progress towards independence.

This brings us once again to a consideration of South Africa itself and that odious blot on human civilization known as the practice and doctrine of apartheid.

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

We must never forget, either here or anywhere else in the civilized world, that apartheid is not merely another eccentric or aberrant political system. It is both in theory and in practice a crime against humanity. Apartheid cannot be reformed; it can only be destroyed. The international community cannot, therefore, relax its commitment to the eradication of apartheid, but must persist in its demand for the lifting of the state of emergency, the release of all political prisoners and detainees, including Nelson Mandela, an end to the harassment of anti-apartheid activists and, most important of all, the free and unrestricted participation of all political groups and parties in the political life of South Africa. We look forward to the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly, in December, which will focus on apartheid and at which we must ensure that additional concrete steps are taken to increase the pressure on the South African régime to abandon apartheid in all its forms and dimensions.

Jamaica was the first State to apply trade sanctions to South Africa. Since then many others have followed suit, and we remain consistent in our determination to continue to press for the ever-widening adoption of this strategy. Moreover, we believe that the extension of this strategy into the area of embargo on all forms of financial flows is the surest way of achieving a non-violent solution to the South African situation. The fact remains, however, that not enough is being done in this regard by the major industrial countries and the major transnational corporations that have still continued to do business with South Africa. This makes it possible for the régime to continue to exist, even in the face of universal moral condemnation. The soothing words and cosmetic gestures now coming out of Pretoria should not be mistaken for a genuine commitment by that régime to eradicate apartheid. They are primarily designed to prevent or dilute precisely the kind of effective economic pressure which the major countries and major

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

transnational corporations can exert upon Pretoria. Nevertheless, the fact that these words are being used and these gestures are being made does indicate that such sanctions as are in place are having some effect. They also point to the fact that there is a significant and growing body of opinion within the white community in South Africa that recognizes both the basic immorality and the ultimate non-viability of the system. If we are serious about ending apartheid, then this is the moment when we should seek every possible means to intensify the pressures on the régime.

I now turn to look at the present situation in the region of which my country is a part - Latin America and the Caribbean. There is no doubt that at the political level considerable progress has been made towards the reduction of tensions and the enlargement of political freedom and the democratic process. In Central America particularly, the Agreements, concluded last August by the five Central American Presidents at Tela, Honduras, have given dramatic impetus to the regional peace process, to the strengthening of the movement towards democratic pluralism and to the establishment of political stability in that region. We note with satisfaction the arrangements which have now been finalized for the establishment of an international support and verification commission, involving the deployment of United Nations military observers, and the important step taken by the Government of Nicaragua in inviting the United Nations and other bodies to send teams of observers to monitor its own electoral process. We strongly commend the Secretary-General, who, through the skilful use of his good offices mission, has unremittingly persisted in efforts to obtain a negotiated solution to the Central American conflict.

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

We should also take note of the fact that Haiti, after many setbacks, appears to be heading towards a restoration of democracy, but it is still too early to be sure that this process will move smoothly to its completion. A ministerial delegation from the Caribbean Community, in which Jamaica participated, visited Haiti recently and held talks with a wide cross-section of the Haitian population in an effort to encourage this process. The announcement of a date in the next year for the holding of elections is encouraging, and the members of the Caribbean Community have pledged to give every assistance to the Government and people of Haiti so long as we see steady progress continuing towards this objective.

On the other hand, it is distressing to observe that in Panama a regressive movement away from democratic and constitutional government was set in motion with the aborting of the elections in May of this year and with the installation of an unrepresentative puppet régime, which took office on 1 September. This melancholy picture has, however, been brightened by certain factors: first, by the strong support expressed by all Latin American countries, through the Organization of American States (OAS), for the Panamanian people in their quest for the restoration of proper democratic and constitutional government and the rule of law; secondly, by the efforts of the OAS itself; and, thirdly, by the willingness of the United States to refrain from unilateral action, and to work within the multilateral inter-American system. While these efforts have not, so far, brought the desired result, we in Jamaica believe very strongly that this is the right way to proceed and that if the efforts are persisted in, firmly and consistently, an appropriate and acceptable solution will be arrived at. In the final analysis, it is the Panamanian people who have to decide their own destiny. But the international community must give strong and appropriate support to those who seek a speedy return to constitutional government.

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

There are, unfortunately, other areas of the world in which long-existing and seemingly intractable disputes continue not only to bring misery and insecurity to the peoples of the countries affected but also, in many instances, to create areas of tension and potential super-Power confrontation, which could threaten world peace and security. I refer particularly, of course, to the Middle East, Afghanistan and Kampuchea. This Organization must continue its efforts in all these areas, however many disappointments and frustrations may be experienced.

There is, however, one general area in respect of which we can only express the most profound satisfaction, and which holds out the greatest promise for the future of mankind. I refer to the notable improvement in the relations between the super-Powers, the continued progress in disarmament and arms control, and the developing convergence of attitudes of the countries of the Eastern and Western blocs. It would, of course, be premature to say that the bipolar world which emerged at the end of the Second World War, and which has been the dominant feature of the past 45 years of world history, is now a thing of the past. Nevertheless, there is good reason to believe that it is becoming so. For the first time, we can dare to believe that the threat of humanity's being destroyed in a nuclear confrontation between East and West will be lifted permanently, and that an era of co-operation, rather than confrontation, between the major ideological and political systems of the world is becoming a real possibility and not just a Utopian dream.

But, even as we recognize and applaud these favourable developments in the political field, we must also recognize that for the majority of mankind the current world economic situation presents a far less favourable picture. Even as the spectre of the mushroom cloud recedes from our immediate vision, there are other spectres, less instantly dramatic but perhaps just as deadly in the long run,

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

that demand the attention of the world community. It is to these other matters that I now turn.

In general economic terms, the decade of the 1980s has been a bleak and, in many cases, disastrous one for most countries of the developing world. The industrialized countries of Europe, North America and Japan have experienced steady growth, rapid technological advance and increasing affluence. By and large, however, they have tended to keep their increasing wealth to themselves - official development aid to, and capital investment in, the developing countries have declined in real terms. Indeed, debt-servicing payments, the fall in commodity prices and the drying-up of commercial lending to the debtor countries have resulted in a massive transfer of real resources from the developing to the developed industrialized countries.

It is true that a handful of developing countries - primarily in East Asia - have experienced spectacular growth and are on the threshold of graduating into developed industrial economies with huge financial surpluses and improved living standards. But for the vast majority of developing countries in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and West Asia the picture has been radically different. Here the picture has been, by and large, one of negative growth, declining per capita income and - what is even worse from the long-term point of view - a decline in standards and levels of education, nutrition, health care and housing. These are, of course, the essentials of human-resource development, without which no sustainable economic growth is possible. A vicious downward spiral has been created whereby, in many countries, the social fabric and political stability are increasingly threatened by a rising tide of misery.

Central to this melancholy picture is the debt crisis - both a symptom and a cause of increasing impoverishment in much of the developing world. Oceans of analysis and of prescriptions have been produced on the subject of the debt crisis,

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

but there has been barely a trickle of effective action to arrive at any definitive amelioration of the problem.

The debtor countries, for their part, have sought - indeed, have been obliged - to follow the path of structural adjustment. In so doing, they have increased their export volume markedly - by some 56 per cent over the decade - and have reduced their import volume by 13 per cent. But, in spite of this tremendous effort and achievement, their debt burden has not been reduced. Indeed, it has increased and is continuing to increase. Over the last three years, the external debt of developing countries has moved from \$1,152 billion to \$1,320 billion. For the 17 most indebted countries, the net transfer of resources to creditor countries totalled in the year 1988 alone approximately \$31 billion. Moreover, the immediate effect of these structural adjustment programmes is often to exacerbate income imbalances within a national economy. This results in the highly explosive situation whereby the production of a stagnant or shrinking economy is being divided in an increasingly unequal fashion.

It is clear that the debtor countries cannot get out of their predicament by their own efforts alone. It is clear also that the lending institutions - both the commercial banks and the multilateral lending agencies - are limited, in the contribution that they can make to a solution, by the imperatives of their own operational requirements and, in many instances, by their own basic rules and regulations.

A much more significant contribution is required from the Governments of surplus creditor countries than they have so far been prepared to make. It is disappointing to note that yet another meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund has come and gone without any indication, from these countries, of a willingness to make the kind of response that the situation requires.

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

The fact is that, while the creditor countries cannot be said to be comfortable with the present situation, because they recognize its long-term dangers to world trade and international stability, they are, however, not so uncomfortable as to be prepared to make the effort and incur the political risks that would be involved in their taking the kind of financial action that is required.

In our view the time has come for the United Nations to take the lead in organizing a constructive dialogue leading to effective action among all the parties involved: the debtor nations, the lending institutions and the creditor countries. A special session of the General Assembly to be convened in 1990 for the purpose of focusing on international economic co-operation could provide the opportunity for such a dialogue. We believe that out of such a dialogue an agreement should emerge to establish an international debt organization funded by contributions from the creditor nations for the purpose of acquiring significant portions of outstanding sovereign debt from the commercial banks at market-determined discounts and passing on the benefit of these discounts to the debtor countries.

In addition, the multilateral lending institutions should be permitted to refinance and restructure their loans so as to eliminate net transfers to them from heavily indebted countries. The debtor countries, as a condition of obtaining this relief, should be required to implement sound economic programmes that would enable them to service their reduced debt obligations and accumulate a sufficient surplus to resume the process of economic growth, social development and a more equitable sharing of the products of their economic systems. By this kind of collaborative effort, with all three parties making an appropriate contribution, there will emerge a real possibility of achieving a permanent solution to the debt crisis,

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

thus creating expanded world trade and a healthier global environment for productive investment from which all people will benefit.

If, as I have said, there is a lack of balance in the degree of seriousness with which creditor and debtor countries view the debt crisis, there are two other problems about which there can be no doubt: that all countries of the world, big and small, developed and undeveloped, must share an equally urgent concern. The first of these is the safeguarding of our environment. The dangers posed to the future of the human race, and indeed to all life on this planet, by the continued pollution and degradation of the total natural environment is at last beginning to get the focus and intensity of attention that it has always deserved. While sound national environmental policies are central to any effort in this regard, there is no doubt that concerted action by the international community is also urgently required.

The numerous environmental problems that are global in nature, which many countries are not equipped to tackle on their own, demand and require a multilateral response. Water and air pollution, soil erosion, waste disposal - to name just a few - all require an increasingly high level of international initiative. Such plans for international action, however, must recognize that in so far as poor developing countries are concerned, there is a causal relationship between environmental degradation, poverty, low educational levels and sheer lack of access to environmentally sound energy and other resources.

The proposed 1992 conference on environment and development represents a step in the right direction towards international co-operation. We must be alert to seize the opportunity to look at all aspects of the problem and to recognize that the alleviation of the economic problems in the poorer countries of the world is an essential pre-condition for the maintenance of sound environmental practices.

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

This is particularly evident in relation to matters such as deforestation. It is unrealistic to believe that people who have no access to any other source of energy to warm themselves or to cook their food will refrain from cutting down trees for firewood out of deference to the possible ecological effects of their actions in some seemingly distant future.

Finally, I turn to the problem of drug abuse and drug trafficking.

Mrs. Margaret Anstee, Director-General of the United Nations Office in Vienna responsible for the United Nations work on this issue, said recently about the narcotic threat: "It is a threat striking at the foundation of civilization and places peace and security in their most fundamental sense increasingly in jeopardy".

Just a few days ago, President Virgilio Barco Vargas of Colombia passionately and movingly described from this rostrum the mortal danger in which his country stands as a result of this increasingly dangerous scourge. There is no doubt that the drug problem has today assumed proportions that are far beyond the capacity of individual States to control. The production, illicit trafficking and distribution of narcotics have resulted in the growth of some of the most terrible criminal organizations the world has ever seen. This is not a problem that affects one or two countries. Nor is it limited to specific areas of the world. Like bizarre caricatures of transnational corporations, the drug cartels are seeking to globalize the financing, production and distribution of their products.

If they succeed, Governments, judicial systems and other national institutions in one country after another will become hostage to them in a horrible game of death and destruction. Nor can responsibility be assigned only to those countries in which illegal narcotics are currently being primarily produced. There is, if anything, an even greater responsibility on those nations which provide the bulk of the consumer market and there is apparently an insatiable and escalating demand.

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

We acknowledge the valuable work that has long been done by the United Nations in identifying the dangers of this traffic and in exploring ways for encouraging international co-operation in combating it. We express our appreciation to those Governments and individuals that have given such valuable service to the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs and provided leadership and guidance for the vital work being carried out by various United Nations bodies. We also acknowledge the useful legal framework to strengthen the capacity of Governments to deal with the illicit production, trafficking and use of narcotic drugs that has been provided by various United Nations conventions. The most recent, of course, was the United Nations Convention concluded in Vienna, in December 1988, which has already been signed by a large number of countries, including my own. But the harsh fact is that, notwithstanding these efforts, this problem has steadily grown to the monstrous and frightening proportions we see today.

In 1986 our Secretary-General made the following statement on drug control in an address to the General Assembly: "Further forms of co-operative international efforts may well be needed. I wonder, for example, if Member States have yet adequately considered the possibility of a strengthened global involvement capability which might reduce the need for Governments to rely on other types of control."

My Government believes that it is incumbent on the Organization to accept the Secretary-General's challenge. Pursuant to this, our Prime Minister has sought and obtained the support of a number of countries in our Caribbean region, as well as others outside the region, and he will continue to canvass support for a specific proposal we shall be presenting to the General Assembly at the appropriate time within the next few weeks. The proposal is for the implementation of a strategy

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

within the United Nations system designed and structured to assist all member countries in their efforts to inhibit the use, interdict the supply and prevent the traffic within and across national boundaries of all illegal narcotic and psychotropic drugs. It is proposed that this strategy would have the following elements:

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

first, a central intelligence-gathering operation which would collate and co-ordinate information on drug trafficking world wide, with particular emphasis on tracing financial flows from this activity; secondly, a training facility for anti-narcotic agents in both investigative and interdiction activities; thirdly, a capability to assist countries that require it in public education designed to control the demand for illicit drugs; fourthly, provision of technical assistance for the creation and maintenance of effective rehabilitation programmes for individuals who have become addicted to narcotic drugs; fifthly, assistance in the planning and administration of income substitution programmes, so as to provide alternative forms of economic activity for persons now engaged in the primary production of narcotic substances, who are often driven to this activity for lack of any other means of livelihood; sixthly, a multilateral and multisectoral unit, operating under United Nations control, consisting of specially trained paramilitary personnel who could be made available to assist countries which request such help to strengthen their own security forces in the war against the well-armed and well-funded forces that protect this illegal traffic.

We believe that in the absence of such an international capability, to which individual countries can look for assistance, two dangerous possibilities exist. One is that a number of countries will find their institutions so corrupted and their security forces so overwhelmed that an orderly democratic society, governed by the rule of law will become impossible. The other danger is that countries so threatened may feel compelled to invite, or powerless to resist, a degree of involvement in their internal affairs by some other countries to which they are obliged to turn for assistance that will be inconsistent with their sovereignty. These are not imaginary dangers. They are very real and present threats being faced by many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

We need hardly emphasize, of course, that the establishment of such a multilateral and multisectoral unit would be based on full respect for each country's sovereignty and would be an instrument available to countries that request it - and only when they request it - and would operate entirely within the limits set by the countries themselves. We hope that this proposal will receive the support of all the Members of the United Nations. We are ready and anxious to consult fully with all Member States so as to ensure that the proposed unit - and all the other elements of the strategy that I have outlined - meets such requirements as Members may see necessary, is supported by the necessary financial resources, and comes into existence as rapidly as possible. We therefore ask all Member States to work with us and our co-sponsoring Caribbean Community (CARICOM) partners to achieve a consensus that will provide an effective international answer to this grave and present danger to the international community.

In closing, Jamaica reaffirms its strong commitment to the multilateral process which is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. We continue to pledge our support to this Organization, an Organization which we feel represents the best hope for the future of mankind.

Mr. ASAMOAH (Ghana): Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to offer you, on behalf of the Ghana delegation, our warm congratulations on your unanimous election. Your election is a reflection not only of the international recognition of the valuable contribution which your country, Nigeria, has made and continues to make towards the promotion of global peace and security, but is also a tribute to the part which you personally have played in fashioning stable and credible international relations. We look forward to working with you in the tradition of our two countries. I should also like to congratulate your immediate predecessor, Mr. Dante Caputo of Argentina, for his excellent leadership during the forty-third session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

Since our last meeting the international political climate has improved but not so the economic situation in most developing countries, which continues to be among the major preoccupations of countries such as mine. In sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, the situation remains critical in spite of the reform policies being implemented by African Governments and the initiatives being taken by the international community to support African recovery efforts. Urgent measures are required to control the crisis and put Africa on the road to sustainable growth.

The Ghana delegation would like to take this opportunity to express sincere appreciation for the financial and other support extended by the international community to Africa since the last session of the General Assembly.

The fact remains, however, that sub-Saharan Africa will continue to require the maximum support and co-operation of the international community, particularly in dealing with the problems of external constraints, which, as confirmed by the Secretary-General in his report on the mid-term review, are "emerging as the most critical obstacle to African recovery and development". These relate to depressed export earnings, the severe debt-servicing burden and insufficient availability of finance.

These obstacles have contributed in no small measure to the weak economic performance of the region, even as global output and trade in 1988 recorded significant growth and expansion. In that year, world trade grew at the remarkable rate of 8.3 per cent and the prices of non-fuel commodities improved substantially. However, the benefits of this strong growth in world trade and output were not evenly shared. Except for metals and sugar, the prices of commodities of interest to Africa either fell or remained weak. Ghana, for instance, lost about \$100 million in 1988 on its earnings from cocoa. With the international cocoa price falling further below last year's levels, the estimates of our losses this year are even higher.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

We believe that the way to bring stability to commodity markets and ensure remunerative prices fair to producer and consumer alike is to make effective use of the mechanisms provided by the Integrated Programme for Commodities. One such mechanism is the Common Fund for Commodities. My delegation, therefore, welcomes the coming into force of the Agreement on the Common Fund for Commodities earlier this year. We should all work actively and constructively to make the Common Fund a worthy example of international co-operation for development.

The large fiscal and trade imbalances of some of the major economies have created considerable strains in the trading system. Protectionist pressures have been mounting, as have unilateral actions. Access of developing countries' exports to markets in the industrialized countries has become increasingly difficult. The Uruguay round of multilateral trade negotiations must lead, among other things, to the removal of both tariff and non-tariff barriers, so as to restore free trade to its proper place in the international trading régime.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

Seven years ago, the concern that had long been growing over the external indebtedness of developing countries erupted into a crisis. Fully aware of its potential for systemic disruption, the international community embarked on an uncertain search for solutions to the problem. Today, we are nowhere near a solution. The crisis has rather deepened. Debt service ratios have on the whole worsened and the magnitude of the debt has increased from a few billion dollars to \$1.3 trillion. One can with good reason conclude that the strategies pursued so far have not been effective. The rescheduling of unmet obligations or the provision of funds to pay accrued interests, which have been the hallmark of debt management strategies, have only postponed current obligations and made debt-servicing burdens over the years even more onerous. Characteristic of the two-little-too-late approach to the solution of the debt problem is the rescheduling options for the Paris Club creditors agreed upon at the Toronto summit in June 1988. The Toronto consensus was heralded as holding promise for significant debt relief for the poorest developing countries on the basis of comparable burden-sharing by all official bilateral creditors. Since then the Paris Club has given further definition of the new options, and it is clear that the short-term cash flow benefits are unlikely to have a significant impact on the debt-servicing burdens of the countries concerned.

When the multilateral financial institutions which were created to assist countries in meeting their short and long-term resource needs become net recipients of resources even from debt distressed developing countries in a region like Africa, it is a clear failure of international policy. The various facilities and programmes established for the purpose of enhancing the lending capacities of the Bretton Woods institutions, such as the World Bank's special programme of assistance to support concessionary co-financing and the Fund's structural adjustment and enhanced structural adjustment facilities, have not been adequate to

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

stem the tide of reverse transfer of resources to these institutions, particularly the Fund. Furthermore, the commendable effort being made by some debtor countries, in spite of severe resource constraints, to meet their debt and other obligations has resulted in the untenable phenomenon, in recent years, of the net transfer of huge resources from developing to developed countries.

This is indeed troubling because other sources of capital flows have levelled off. Reduction in private lending has been drastic while official development assistance has stagnated at more or less half of the target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product established by the United Nations. I must here pay a deserved tribute to those developed countries that have attained or even exceeded this target.

Faced with these constraints, most developing countries carrying out structural adjustment programmes have not been able to register growth in their economies. Investment to enable them to expand their productive base and create jobs and wealth has had to be drastically curtailed. Equally affected is investment in social infrastructure, such as health and education.

In Africa, the economic and social situation is a matter of deep concern. Per capita output has been negative for several consecutive years. Average living standards have been falling and large sections of the population are unable to meet their basic needs. It is a region that, according to the estimates of the Economic Commission for Africa, suffered terms of trade losses in 1987 of the order of \$19 billion, transferred over \$1 billion net to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and repaid several billion dollars to creditors. It also faces a resource gap variously estimated by the World Bank, the IMF and the Secretary-General's Advisory Group on Resource Flows to Africa to be between \$1.5 billion and \$5 billion per annum.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

At a time when many developing countries have been carrying out structural adjustment and policy reforms, it is difficult to understand why their determined efforts should be so needlessly undercut by an inadequate response of the developed countries. It is even more incomprehensible that the industrialized countries stubbornly refuse to engage in such dialogue as would ensure justice for the developing countries. The alternative to dialogue is confrontation. The economic and social hardship imposed on developing countries through a conscious policy of maintaining economic inequalities emanating from colonialism is a potent threat to international peace and security, to the sustainability of the adjustment programmes and indeed of debt-servicing obligations, with dire implications for the international financial system as a whole.

Clearly the growing economic marginalization of important regions in an interdependent world cannot be allowed to continue. That was why the Group of 77 called for the holding of a special session of the General Assembly to examine ways and means of reactivating growth, particularly in the developing countries. The session, to be held early next year, should reach a consensus on policy measures to be adopted to ensure the economic recovery and development of the developing countries. The outcome of the special session will no doubt provide useful inputs for the elaboration of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade. We should make the 1990s a decade of hope, of recovery from economic and social decline, of equitable international economic relations, and a decade in which development will regain its lost momentum.

No country can today remain aloof from the concern expressed world-wide over environmental degradation and the daily damage to our climate conditions whose harmful effects know no boundaries. The Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 held in Caracas this year recognized the importance of this issue and emphasized

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

the close relationship between poverty and environmental degradation. Ghana therefore supports the proposed conference on the environment to be held in 1992.

We wish to stress that the developed countries bear greater responsibility not only because they are largely responsible for the degradation of the environment and pollution of the atmosphere but also because they have the resources and technical know-how for reversing the situation while promoting sustainable development. They also have responsibility to stop the unconscionable conduct on the part of their industrialists of dumping hazardous wastes in developing countries. We should also like to see an international convention with appropriate penalties for the dumping of toxic waste. In this connection, it is a matter of deep regret that the Basel Convention of 22 March 1989 on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste and Their Disposal has not met the concerns of all. It does not provide for stopping waste traffic from the industrialized world to developing countries desperate for hard currency.

We would also like to caution against the concern for the environment on the part of the developed countries being translated into environmental conditionalities for development assistance. That concern should be channelled into research for new and environmentally more secure technologies that should be freely available to all.

Improved East-West relations continue to strengthen prospects for further advances in arms control and disarmament. This is particularly true of the ongoing East-West talks in Vienna on cutting down conventional weapons and thereby reducing the risk of war in Europe. While the negotiations are fraught with complexities the opening bargaining positions have been close enough to give hope that a conventional arms treaty in Europe could be a reality.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

The lesson of the Vienna talks should not be lost on developing countries, which should not indulge in unrestricted purchase of such weapons. In this regard much will depend on the extent to which East-West détente and non-interference in the internal affairs of developing countries makes this unnecessary.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

We welcome President Bush's proposals on the banning of chemical weapons and the encouraging response by the Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze. Ghana shares the international concern about the use and spread of chemical weapons. This concern underlies our signing of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, which outlaws such weapons, and our support for the declaration adopted at the end of the Paris Conference held early this year. We hope that the statements by the Soviet Union and the United States will help speed up the Geneva negotiations on a chemical-weapons convention.

With regard to nuclear disarmament, Ghana is concerned about the slow rate of progress so far registered. Despite current positive developments in the field of disarmament, the world is still threatened by the massive stock of nuclear arsenals. We call upon the super-Powers and other nuclear-weapon States to redeem their promises of effectively eliminating nuclear weapons from our planet.

The global drive for peace continues to show encouraging results in several regions. Conflict and confrontation seem to be giving way to political dialogue and negotiation, and even if the guns are not entirely silent the overwhelming desire is for conciliation and mutual accommodation.

It is a matter of deep regret that the United Nations, which has been a major contributor to this encouraging trend, should continue to be starved of funds, particularly as the reforms recommended in 1985 by the high-level governmental experts have been implemented almost in full.

To the critics of the United Nations we say that the problem does not lie with the Organization. The problem may well lie with their perceptions of the Organization, which fortunately are not shared by the majority of Member States. We wish to reiterate our appeal to those Member States still withholding their contributions to release them so as to make the Organization solvent. We also take

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

this opportunity to support, in principle, the Secretary-General's proposal for the establishment of a special reserve fund for peace-keeping operations.

Ghana had hoped that the month-long Paris Conference on Kampuchea, which ended in failure five weeks ago, would build upon the very useful groundwork done in Indonesia earlier in the year. We are happy to note, however, that it will reconvene in the spring of 1990. We urge all the parties to exercise maximum flexibility in order to resolve their outstanding differences.

On the Middle East, Ghana continues to support the call for an international peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations, to be attended by all parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), to deal with the problems of Palestinian rights and secure boundaries for all States in the region. The recently announced, hard-line conditions for carrying out the election proposals made by Israel have not improved the prospects for peace in that troubled land. The conditions - which are that no elections will be held until the intifadah ends, that Arabs in East Jerusalem will not be permitted to take part, that Jewish settlements will continue to be built, and that Israel will not agree to give up any land - are not designed to promote peace. So far, the PLO and its Arab friends have been making all the running for peace. We call upon Israel to reciprocate these peace gestures.

The current peace efforts in the Afghanistan situation urgently need to be strengthened. Eighteen months after the signing of the Geneva Agreements and seven months after the Soviet troop pull-out, Afghanistan continues to suffer from gross and unwarranted external interference. The Assembly should call for the immediate cessation of external interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan so that the Afghan peoples can together reconstruct their country.

(Mr. Asamoa, Ghana)

The peace process in the Iran-Iraq situation also requires a new impetus. We welcome the several rounds of talks under the auspices of the United Nations, including the proposals for confidence-building measures between the two parties. For the peace efforts to succeed, however, Iran and Iraq would have to show the necessary flexibility and move away from the present impasse by narrowing their positions on the constituent elements of the cease-fire, including, in particular, the withdrawal of forces to internationally recognized boundaries and the early return to navigation of the Shatt al-Arab waterway. We also call upon the two parties to allow the prisoner-of-war exchange to proceed as required by article 118 of the 1949 Geneva Convention.

Since the last session of the General Assembly significant developments have been taking place in Central America, raising the prospect of peace in that region. It is our firm conviction that the Esquipulas-II Agreements remain the most viable basis for bringing peace to the region. We therefore support the efforts of the five leaders of Central America and urge all parties to exercise the necessary political will and restraint, which alone can give the peace arrangements the chance to work.

The current wave of international peace has also washed the African shore. The peace treaty signed on Thursday, 31 August, between Libya and Chad, ending their 16-year-old conflict, reflects the happy turn of events on the continent.

We welcome the peace efforts in Angola and Mozambique. We continue to watch with much interest the ongoing consultations on the planned referendum on Western Sahara, whose people cannot be denied their legitimate aspirations indefinitely.

The situation in southern Africa, however, continues to be a matter of deep concern. The brutal repression and harassment of the members of the mass

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

democratic movement protesting against the sham all-white elections held on 6 September should make all those who see the end of apartheid in South Africa's cosmetic peace overtures sit back and think again. The racist régime has not, despite its recent declarations and overtures, shown any willingness to move in the direction of real justice for the black majority. The racist régime continues to fund and direct the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR) to ravage Mozambican peasants and workers. It also continues to provide weapons to the UNITA bandits to undermine the efforts for peace in Angola. It has through trickery and treachery sought to rig the Namibian elections, in flagrant disregard of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). The verdict of the Security Council contained in its unanimous resolution 640 (1989), adopted in August, has clearly exposed the contradiction between what South Africa preaches and what it actually does. There is a need, therefore, for the international community to remain vigilant and maintain its pressure on the racist régime.

Our oft-stated position, in the light of the worsening situation, is that South Africa must lift the state of emergency immediately and unconditionally, release Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners and detainees, lift the ban on all political organizations and opponents of apartheid, commence meaningful negotiations with genuine black leaders on ending apartheid, halt the carnage in Mozambique and Angola caused by its surrogate organization, and cease military aggression against its neighbours in order to end apartheid and bring peace and security to the area. Until that is done, comprehensive mandatory sanctions should be imposed on the racist régime by the international community.

(Mr. Asamoah, Ghana)

In conclusion, we must stress that the ever-widening gap between the developed and the developing countries remains an urgent matter for solution by the international community. It calls for a realistic approach which fully reflects the spirit of interdependence and international co-operation which has emerged in dealing with political issues.

Ghana welcomes the commendable efforts by the United Nations in the discharge of its role of promoting peace, social progress and better standards of life for peoples throughout the world. As we enter a new decade, this role will become even more important. The United Nations requires the co-operation of all Member States in the years ahead in dealing with its daunting tasks. The people and Government of Ghana stand ready to play their part.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.